

# **Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission**

**Minutes of October 17, 2008**

## **Quarterly Meeting**

**The meeting was called to order by Susan Baxter, Chair, at 8:35 am**

### **Commissioners & Designees: in attendance**

**Baxter, Susan – Chair**

**Aaronson, Roberta**

**Barge, Denise**

**Bodington, Susan**

**Evora, Michael**

**Fields, Barbara**

**Flynn, Kevin**

**Grenon, Paul**

**Hajian, Kaveh**

**Hammarström, David**

**Hannifan, Chris**

**Kiesel, Marilyn**

**Kravitz, Tom**

**McGunagle, Joanne**

**Ryczek, Jim**

**Sekeres, Bonnie**

**Vanderslice, Bob (in place of Ana Novais)**

**Walsh, Peter**

**Staff:**

**Costa, Maria**

**DeLos Santos, Doris**

**Kue, Simon**

**Neirinckx, Ray**

**Shawcross, Noreen**

**Tondra, Michael**

**Guests**

**Rhode Island Housing Staff**

**Frank Saccoccio**

**David Comerford**

**Kent Ackley**

## **1. Approval of July 18, 2008 Minutes**

**Jim Ryczek made a motion to approve the minutes; Peter Walsh seconded.**

**Marilyn Kiesel brought to the attention of the Commission that on page 3, section referencing Section 6 B 3.1 should say after 1978 instead of 2008. In addition, Jim Ryczek asked to change all references to “CLAP” to “working group lead by CLAP” on pages 3 and 4. Minutes were accepted as amended.**

## **2. Report of Chair**

**Susan Baxter started the meeting by informing the Commission that there was a supplemental package for members to review.**

### **Celebration**

**Susan reported that there have been a number of ribbon cutting events for HRC funded developments including SWAP's Southside Gateway, the Women's Development Corporation's elderly housing in West Warwick, and three units for families in Pawtucket. In addition, she emphasized on how gratifying it was to meet families moving from the New Hope family shelter into these magnificent homes.**

### **Expedited Permit**

**Simon Kue organized a workshop on Expedited Permit was held on September 30, 2008 to get public input to assist in the development of regulations for the process that was passed into law in July. The turnout was excellent and the workshop was well received.**

### **Homeless Issues**

**Susan indicated as discussed at the last commission meeting, there was concern about the coming winter months and the need for shelter. The hope that the changes made by PUC with regard to back bills, the lower oil costs and increase in LIHEAP funds will reduce those displaced by utility bills. She added despite all the activity in Washington, tenant foreclosures continue to escalate and**

unemployment is causing more and more housing loss. A meeting with a group in the community is being organized by the RI State Council of Churches for further discussion of winter needs and plans.

### **HRC Meeting Calendar 2009**

A 2009 Meeting Calendar has been provided to the commission members. Dates are as follows: January 16th, March 20th, May 15th, July 17th, and October 16th. Attendance throughout the year has been greatly appreciated and we have not been without a quorum.

### **Office of Homeownership-Neighborhood Stabilization Program**

The Office of Homeownership was reactivated on September 22, 2008.

It is anticipated that there will be an overlap of issues among the office participants and the state's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program which is the recipient of \$19,600,000 in Neighborhood Stabilization Funds (NSP). The CDBG program will work in partnership with RI Housing and the state's municipalities to administer funds to target neighborhoods most impacted by foreclosure. As a reminder, the HRC and CDBG are co-located in the Office of Housing & Community Development within DOA's Division of Planning. This new program is causing a major strain on our already limited staff, so an additional CDBG position has been requested. 10% administration function will assist us in hiring this new staff person for the NSP work. Noreen and Susan Bodington explained the NSP. There were questions about who will identify the properties and what % of units require handicap accessible. Noreen

responded by stating she will be having a conference call today regarding using a program for persons with disabilities.

Diane Barge added that the focus areas should be Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls. Noreen responded that data collection will identify target areas. Barbara Fields affirmed the importance of neighborhood stabilization with the use of the NSP.

A plan will be submitted to HUD by December 1st. There will be a fifteen day public comment period prior to submission. The HRC will be kept informed.

Budget update 8% across the board cuts (\$160,000) in our program. We are seeking an exemption of cuts due to the homelessness risks with the winter months.

### **3. Budget Update**

Noreen provided a copy of the HRC budget and informed the Commissioners that there was to be an 8% across the board cut in all agencies. She has requested an exemption due to our agency's need to provide a safety net.

### **4. Resolution Funding for the Building Homes RI Bonds & NOP**

Carol Ventura of RI Housing presented the committee with a PowerPoint presentation of the recommended projects. In total 47

applications were received, 15 projects for funding; \$33M was requested and \$10.2M is available. Carol described each of the projects below. Following the presentation of the Crossroads proposal, Barbara Fields noted concerns about tax credits being available as the 4% market is disappearing. Susan Bodington responded that Crossroads is confident that they can get investors.

**Rental: \$ 7,726,276**

**Crossroads \$2,500,000**

**East Bay CDC \$2,500,000**

**E.A. Fish \$ 756,276**

**Church Community Housing \$ 740,000**

**AS220 \$ 640,000**

**SWAP \$ 590,000**

**Homeownership: \$2,480,000**

**East Bay CDC \$ 579,720**

**Washington County CDC \$ 375,000**

**Diocese of Providence \$ 350,305**

**Sunn Builders \$ 325,000**

**Community Works RI \$ 280,000**

**SWAP \$ 241,500**

**Greenwich Bay Development \$ 238,765**

**Church Community Housing \$ 50,000**

**Habitat-South County \$ 39,710**

**N.O.P Operating: \$2,500,000 – total for 10 years of operations**

**Family Life Center \$ 1,077,520**

**Operation Stand Down \$ 408,840**

**SWAP \$ 349,680**

**East Bay CAP \$ 330,960**

**REACH \$ 224,280**

**AS220 \$ 108,720**

**Noreen presented an overview of how NOP was combined with the BHRI bond program.**

**Marilyn Kiesel asked for confirmation that subsidized homes cannot be sold at market rate and that deed restrictions would be in place. Barbara Fields noted that she had voted against Greenwich Bay due to the large developer's fee. Barbara wants a stronger review process for the profit financial projects for future BHRI applications. Applications will be revised in order to capture this information and to get financials from for profits as part of the application. Chris Hannifan volunteered to be part of a working group to revamp the application. RI Housing will convene if necessary.**

**Barbara also asked about the time table. She would like to recapture funds not used in six months. Susan Bodington responded that we will monitor market conditions and review projects regularly. Susan Baxter noted that the six months time frame is in our regulations but flexibility may be required. RI Housing was asked to provide a status**

**report to the Commission.**

**Peter Walsh moved approval of the resolution allocating funding for BHRI and NOP. The motion was seconded by David Hammarström. Paul Grenon asked for an amendment to the motion to cap developers' fees by 20% and to reset the award for the Greenwich Bay. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Susan thanked Carol and Rhode Island Housing for all of their work.**

#### **4. Resolution to Approve Lead Hazard Mitigation Regulations as amended**

**There was a public hearing on September 25, 2008. Two major issues were addressed:**

**(1) The suggestion that a property owner could file an affidavit confirming attendance at the three hour Lead Hazard Awareness class was not accepted. A copy of certificate of attendance must be included with inspection report.**

**(2) The issue of using an affidavit to verify post 1978 components was resolved by allowing inspectors to use professional knowledge and judgment.**

**Doris answered some questions made by members and clarified the changes in the amendment.**



**There was a motion made by Peter Walsh and seconded by Roberta Aaronson to approve the Lead Hazard Mitigation Regulations as amended. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Susan Baxter thanked all who worked so hard on these regulations to improve the health of children.**

## **5. Resolution to Approve the Memorandum of Agreement between HRC and Rhode Island Housing**

**Susan Baxter reviewed the Coordinating Committee annual meeting process Noreen highlighted the updates. Susan Bodington moved to amend the Section 6 (b) of the MOA by deleting the words “and determine” and in the same section, following the word recommendations, “to the Housing Resources Agency” to reflect the language in the law. Paul Grenon moved approval of the motion as amended. Kevin Flynn seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Bonnie Sekeres moved to amend the MOA, Section 6 (c) to be consistent with the intent of the MOA as an agreement between RIH and the HRC rather than insert the Dept. of Administration as a party to the agreement. Kevin Flynn seconded. Motion passed. Susan Baxter asked that Noreen rewrite the agreement accordingly.**

## **6. Public Comment Period**

**Barbara Fields informed the commission of the following scheduled**

**events:**

**10/17/08 - ALCO – City of Providence**

**10/20/08 - Parkis Avenue, 10:30 am.**

**National Award from Met Life – Community Works in Providence (US Senator Whitehouse and US Representative Langevin will be in attendance.)**

**Roberta Hazen Aaronson announced:**

**10/24/08**

**Childhood Lead Workshops**

**Lois Gibbs will be the keynote speaker**

**Jeanne Cola will be receiving an award**

**Nellie Gorbea announced that she had brought copies of the HousingWorksRI “Fact Book.”**

**Kent Ackley thanked the HRC and staff for hearing the comments of lead inspectors which have come to the point that they can get on with their businesses.**

## **7. Adjournment**

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am. The next meeting will be Friday, January 16, 2009 at 8:30 am.**